

May 18, 2022

New York City Reaches High Alert Level; COVID-19 Health System Updates, May 18

With cases still on the rise in the area, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has designated the city as having a “high” community alert for COVID-19. This triggers some policy changes for the Mount Sinai Health System.

Most importantly, masks are now required everywhere in Mount Sinai Health System facilities, unless you are alone in a private office, or eating in a designated break area at least six feet away from other people. This is consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s guidance, which recommends masking in all public spaces in high-community-level areas.

For context, here are the latest numbers. As of this morning, we had 115 inpatients with COVID-19 across the system, 13 of whom were in critical care. These numbers have been trending slowly upward over the last several weeks, but are still below the peak of last summer’s Delta wave, and the increases are nothing like we saw during Omicron in December and January.

The New York State seven-day average test positivity rates as of yesterday were 5.2 percent for New York City, 10.8 percent for Long Island, and 9.5 percent for the mid-Hudson region. The New York City number has been relatively stable for the last couple of weeks, but the numbers outside the city are concerning.

Although most COVID-19 cases we are seeing in this current wave appear to be mild, and many of the inpatients with COVID-19 came here for other reasons and tested positive incidentally, this is still a dangerous disease to people who are at high risk because of their immunological status or comorbidities. Please do your part to help protect yourself, your patients, and your coworkers and loved ones by following this masking guidance and getting a booster shot if you need one.

Thank you as always for the safe, compassionate, and equitable care you provide every day. Working together, we will get through this as we have so many times before.